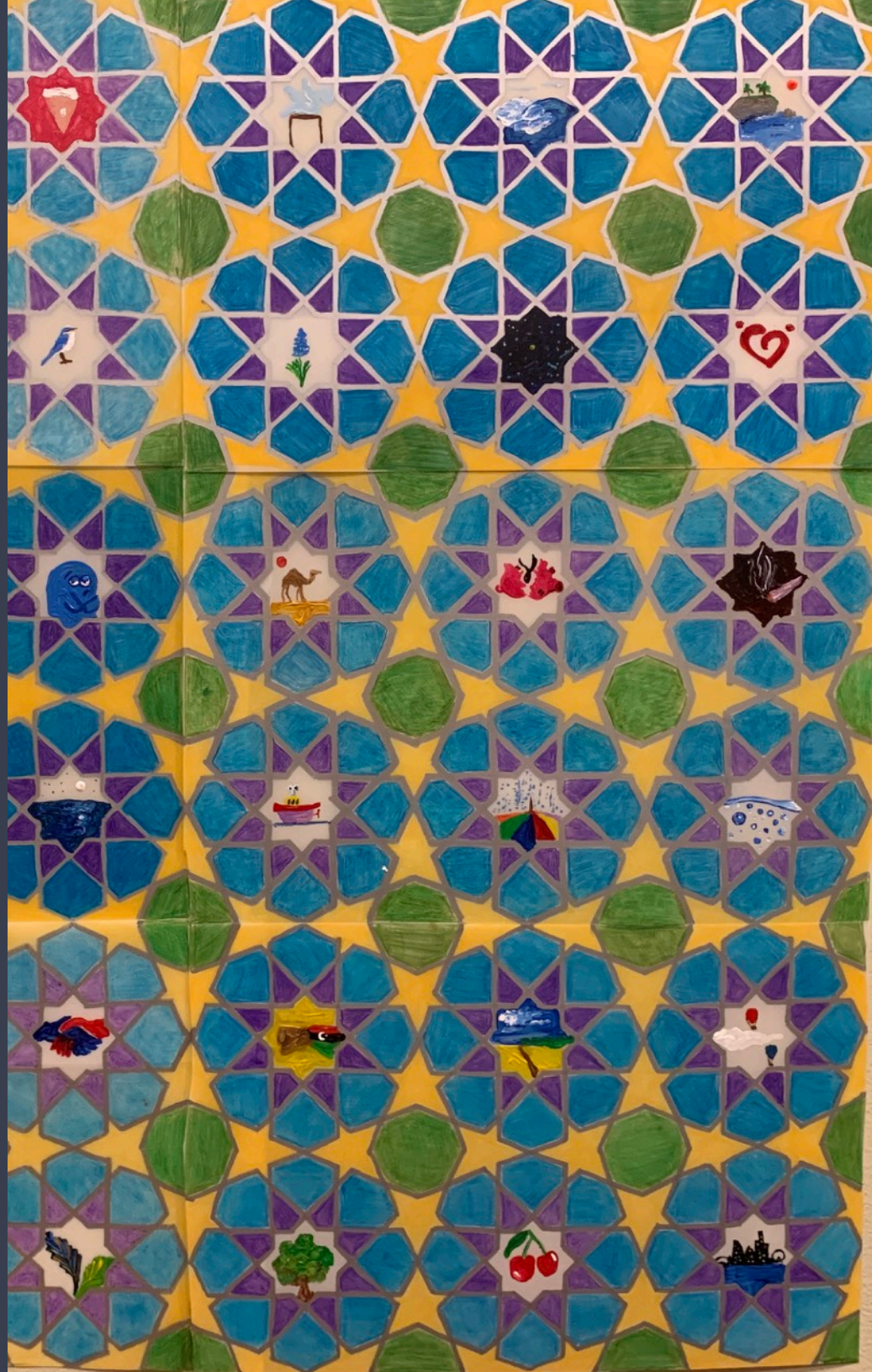
FOUND:

Muslim Resistance and Community

October 6th–October 27th
PO Box Collective
Chicago IL

Instagram @foundexhibit



WE ARE HERE. WE ARE CREATIVE. OUR VOICES MATTER.

Found: Muslim Resistance and Community is an exhibit that celebrates Muslim communities and their creativity through radical art, workshops, screenings and activities. Every day, American Muslims endure public spaces that tell us we don't belong; this exhibit is a way to illustrate to our community that we deserve to have our voices heard. While Arab, Muslim and immigrant communities are often targeted by the state, media and some individuals to try and find terrorism, violence and hate, this exhibit aims to show what they will find instead: **resistance, voice, struggle, multiplicities, beauty and hope.** This booklet (and the exhibit) is organized around these themes.

Featured Artists: Nadine Abdelrahim, Leila Abdelrazaq, Nadia Ahmed, Sarah Ahmed, Ammara Alvi, Amelia Bader, Nissrine Bedda, Shirien Damra, Ayesha Farhat, Mila Hakim, Naseem Hamdan, Katie Haseeb, Suemaya Haydar, Mary Hazboun, Najlah Iqbal, Idrees Kamal, Iman Kort, Wayne Lindsey, Meriem Sadoun, Nidal Sher, Ali Siddiqui, Ariya Siddiqui, Sobia Sultana, Lamia Tabara, Savneet Talwar, Danya Zituni, Shannon Downey + Nashiha Alam, Hoda Katebi + Mary Zerkel, IMAN artists.

FINDING RESISTANCE

Muslim and Arab communities across the world have been subject to racial profiling, surveillance, and occupations.

These pieces explore struggle and resistance and beg us to investigate what it means to rise up.

End racial profiling

DANYA ZITUNI

- Arab educator and graphic artist currently working at the Arab American National Museum in Dearborn, and former youth organizer at the Arab American Action Network in Chicago.
- Instagram: @radicalolives

My work is centered around uplifting Arab resistance to surveillance, Zionism, and other forms of state violence.

Thoughts and Prayers; Masjid Drip; Zombie Girl

MILA HAKIM

- Mila Hakim is a highly acclaimed Muslim American Designer whose ground-breaking artwork has been shattering perceptions through a dynamic blend of modernist and traditional styles. Her unique ability to capture the essence of the Muslim-American experience speaks to the current culture; whilst showcasing a wide array of techniques and variety across her growing portfolio.

- Instagram @Milahakim_

- Twitter: @KoolKatMila

Hailing from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, she studied design at the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee and has been a Graphic Designer for the past 4 years. As the co-founder of one of Milwaukee's standout up-and-coming Arts Collective's, Fanana Banana, she has been featured in a multitude of publications including 88Nine Radio Milwaukee and the Wisconsin Muslim Journal. Mila uses a distinct minimalistic style and her love for the color pink is evident throughout her eye-catching work. Her identity plays an integral role in her creative endeavors; meshing together unique features and fragments of her religious and cultural experiences to produce some of the most distinct artwork for wider audiences to enjoy.

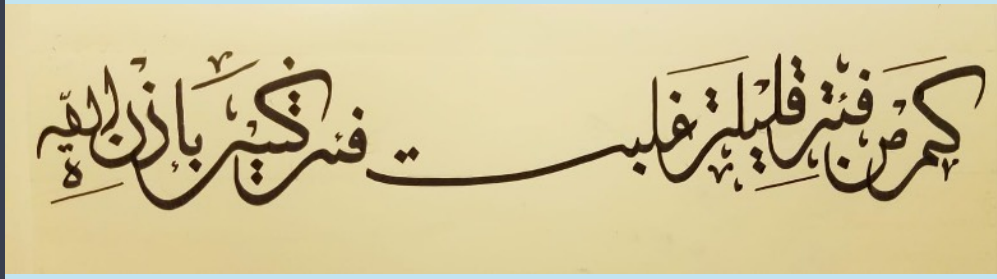
David and Goliath (2:249)

ALI SIDDIQUI

- **Ali Siddiqui is a former Chicago Public Schools teacher and a graduate of Loyola University Chicago. Ali currently works to help develop online learning experiences for emerging, local nonprofits in the Global South.**

“How many a small company has overcome a large company by permission of Allah." Al-Baqarah (2:249). This verse, alluding to the tale of David and Goliath, encapsulates the timeless sentiment of resistance– the small and marginalized rising up against the seemingly insurmountable giants of oppression and injustice. Written in the classic Thuluth script, this piece depicts two "companies" on opposing sides divided by a thin line, a power struggle akin to a tug of war.

The verse, a rallying cry to activists and advocates alike, is meant to amplify voices once muffled by the masses. it is meant to imbue within the heart of each battle-scarred revolutionary a sense of certainty, purpose, and hope– hope that no matter the obstacles that inevitably lay ahead, it is just a matter of time. For, as the verse concludes "Allah is with the patient."



#HonorRasmea

LEILA ABDELRAZAQ

- Leila Abdelrazaq is a Detroit-based Palestinian author and artist. Her debut graphic novel, Baddawi (Just World Books 2015) was shortlisted for the 2015 Palestine Book Awards and has been translated into three languages. She is also the author and Illustrator of The Opening (Tosh Fesh, 2017) as well as a number of zines and short comics. Leila has been involved in organizing in various capacities since 2011, and integrates art making into her organizing work. She is also the founder of Bigmouth Press & Comix, a blog, zine distro, and micro-press dedicated to uplifting the work of women* and non-binary comics artists from the AMEMSA (African, Middle Eastern, Muslim, and South Asian) world and its diaspora(s).

I am the daughter of a Palestinian refugee from Lebanon, and today I live as part of the Palestinian diaspora in the United States. Through my art, I try to dissect what it means to exist in diaspora, to engage with issues that concern us as Palestinians, to educate the wider public about the Palestinian struggle, and to draw cross-movement connections from Palestine to the U.S. and beyond. I also try to create art that can be used in movements, like comics and zines that transform into tools to inform and activate people in campaign work.

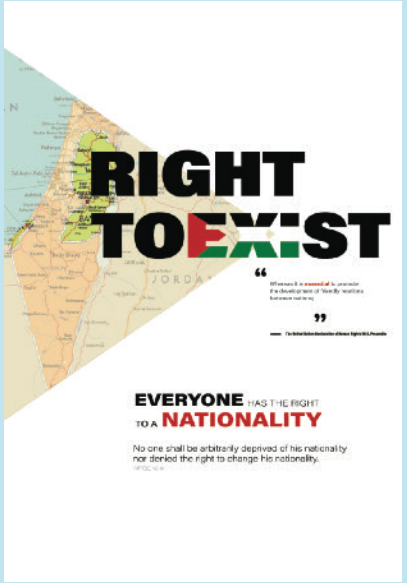
Curator's Note: #HonorRasmea was created in 2017, when Rasmea Odeh, teacher, human rights advocate and a leading member of Chicago's Arab and Muslim communities, was stripped of her citizenship and deported to Jordan following a plea agreement that was reached after a three-year legal battle that exposed the human rights violations and misogyny of the Israeli state and the US Justice system.

The Right to Exist

LAMIA TABARA

- Born in a very cultured and religious home, Lamia grew up with much pride in her middle eastern heritage and religious beliefs. It was through the support from her family that she decided to pursue to Design in hopes that her pieces make a difference.

This design is a 2 part poster which is meant to inform the viewer about the oppression Palestine is experiencing. One poster will focus on a particular Article from the Declaration of Human Rights 1948 and the second on a human rights violation.



Judariyat Falasteen

JANINE KATBEH

- I'm a 16 year old artist who has been creating cultural resistance paintings and either selling them for a good cause or just showing them off. All of my paintings have stories and this was just one of them.

I am Palestinian and I wanted to tell the world about the story of Palestine. My cultural resistance painting tells several stories from nonviolent resistance to the struggles of Palestinians, Apartheid, and the right to return to the homeland.

FINDING OUR VOICES

Colonialism, orientalism, anti-Blackness, and anti-immigrant sentiments have shaped the American narrative around Muslims and other marginalized groups. These pieces explore how Muslim identities are vast, complex and beautiful. Despite the pressure to see Muslim folx as one-dimensional, these artists attempt to show Muslims as they see themselves.

Ceci n'est pas un hijab

NADINE ABDELRAHIM

- **Nadine Abdelrahim received a BFA in New Media Arts and a BA in Media, Rhetorical, and Cultural Studies from the University of Illinois at Chicago. She currently resides with her two cats in the suburbs of Chicago.**

- **nadineabdel.com**

My works highlight moments of imagined exploration – be it mental, sexual, or subconscious states, that all deal with feeling a little bit out of place. I constantly use my own image to not only re-connection, but also infiltrate a society that doesn't always allow for my acceptance. As a queer, Muslim, American-Palestinian artist, the constant reevaluation and blending of images feel necessary in order to find individual self within a community – the collective individual. Through mediums such as sculpture, video, installation and text, I am able to form narratives that allow unspoken conversations within my own central community as well as between seemingly different communities.

Behind the Scene

AMMARA ALVI

- Ammara is a Pakistani Born American Oil Artist
- Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/ammzalvi/
- YouTube Channel: Ammara Alvi

Oil and ink on handmade vintage paper. The concept behind it is how a woman sees the world and how the worlds sees her.

Portrait of a Refugee

NADIA AHMED

- Nadia Ahmed is a 22 year old Artist who is inspired by nature, combat sports, people-watching, and the human skeleton.
- Instagram: @nadiatheartist.

I saw a photograph of a teenage Syrian refugee a while back, and realized that visibly Muslim people, let alone Muslim refugees, are invisible in fine art. I wanted to show that beauty and art isn't limited to a specific demographic.

Turbans

SAVNEET TALWAR

- **Savneet Talwar is a Professor in the graduate art therapy program at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.**

Savneet Talwar is a crafter and art therapist and was the founder of the CEW (Creatively Empowered Women) Design Studio.

Collection Marocaine

NISSRINE BEDDA

- **A 17 year old girl who has design a launched a brand because she's fed up with Maghreb stereotypes. Rue Maghreb, a brand where Maghreb/Amazigh heritage and street wear collide.**

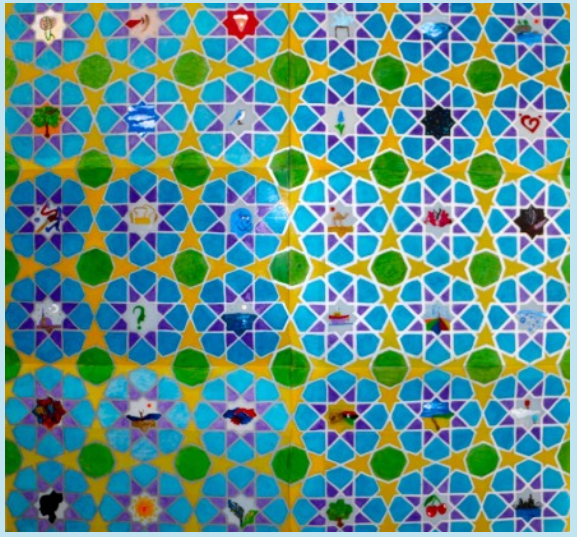
Collection Marocaine brings out Maghrebi roots to the Western world. This street wear line allows Moroccans to connect with people they may see on a daily basis, and educate them about Moroccan culture.

Tessellated Identities - Life within the Hyphen

ARIYA SIDDIQUI

- **As an artist, I have experience in ceramics, drawing, painting, glass blowing, and film. Periodically I have been known to present this work to the public. Currently I am working on a screenplay explores the Intersectionality of the Muslim community.**

Exploring life within hyphenated identities. Islamic art does not include iconography, instead we have tessellations. To explore hyphenated identities, I asked 12 different Muslims to take part in a word association game dealing with their hyphenated identities and weaved their answers within the tessellation. The Mosaic tessellation in this piece serves two purposes. One, from inside the tessellation, it shows that identities connect us, and that Muslims have a common connection. No matter what identity you choose, Algerian, queer, mother, biker, you will always be a part of the grander muslim fabric, or tessellation. Two, from outside the tessellation, when someone looks at another human being and has already defined them, they will never be able to see the whole human being, They will only be able to see a snapshot of that person, and this piece shows that by only showing a small window of that person. The piece was made on an opaque glass like paper, to emphasize that identities are fragile, blurred, and transparent, using varied color gradients as the attachment to the connecting Muslim identity is varied and differs from people to people.



WGN v. Hoda Katebi

SHANNON DOWNEY + NASHIHA ALAM

- Shannon Downey is a feminist, activist, community organizer, professor, and artist in Chicago. Best known for their viral embroidery activism pieces, they are also known for running multiple internet sites supporting craftivism, spotlighting empowering women, and sharing their art/activism/work.

- Nashiha Alam is the Digital Organizer at Grassroots Collaborative. She holds a B.A. in Women's and Gender Studies from Loyola University Chicago, and was an awardee at Chicago Women and Femmes to Celebrate in 2017. Nashiha became politicized through the Palestine liberation movement and went on to build her skills within community organizing in Chicago. She has worked in the immigrant rights movement at Asian Americans Advancing Justice-Chicago, and in the reproductive justice movement at National Asian Pacific Women's Forum, where she built a framework for community organizing. Nashiha is also a collective member of Chicago Desi Youth Rising, developing political and leadership of South Asian youth across the city of Chicago.

This piece captures a viral moment when radical fashion blogger and organizer Hoda Katebi was interviewed by WGN Chicago anchors.

FINDING STRUGGLE

United States foreign and domestic policies have disproportionately targeted Muslims, immigrants, refugees, and communities of color. From government surveillance and travel bans to deportations and detentions, Muslim communities in the U.S. have, and continue to experience, undue trauma. These policies have real-life consequences on the everyday experiences of Muslims around the world. These pieces speak to the weight those policies place.

New York 1998

MERIEM SADOUN

- **Meriem is an Amazigh Algerian writer and filmmaker based in Chicago. Her work is driven by the love of creative expression to celebrate Amazigh, Algerian, Muslim, and American cultures. Meriem's past films are experimental short documentaries and writes creative fiction in the sci-fi/fantasy genre. She explores themes of healing, identity, and cultural shifts. Meriem was awarded the "Young Filmmaker Award" for her debut short film "Thasakoorth", which won the "Best Short Film" at the New York Forum of Amazigh Film 2018, and was part of the World Congress for Middle Eastern Studies Seville 2018 film festival.**

- **meriemsadoun.myportfolio.com/**

FILM SHORT SHOWN ON 10.18

The script and the shot list of "New York 1986" was created based on narrative interviews of Lahcene Sadoun and the reflections of his son. Lahcene's character experienced many of the same life moments of my father, Lahcene Sadoun. This film is my own interpretation as a director and writer of the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors of asylum seekers. My greatest hope for this film is to draw people in to reflect on their own experiences and that of their parents', especially if they are immigrants to better understand what may have been lost in translation-or simply never related to humanize a generation of people who witnessed much but share little about it. In the film the main character makes a remark about the lack of care the Algerian government had for its citizens, and his certainty that his hard work in the United States will pay off. A common American myth is success comes to those who can pull themselves up by their bootstraps. And that our democracy is the exemplar of democracy. However, the current social issues of the United States strongly suggest that success comes to a select few. And although our democracy offers many liberties, it suffers the same shortcomings as other nations that persecute their own citizens.

In these ways "New York 1998" is a piece of art that preserves a family legacy, while also drawing attention to the national history and politics of the United States and Algeria. Most simply this film highlights the intrinsic need humans have for connection, for a safe place to live and for a voice that is heard.

The War on Terror and Policing

HODA KATEBI + MARY ZERKEL

- Hoda Katebi is a Chicago-based Muslim-Iranian abolitionist, photographer, author, community organizer, and radical fashion blogger. In 2013 she started JooJoo Azad, a radical, anti-capitalist fashion blog that has been hailed from the Malala Foundation Blog to Mother Jones. In 2016 Hoda published the book Tehran Streetstyle, the first-ever in-print collection of streetstyle photography from Iran aimed to challenge both Western Orientalism and domestic Iranian mandatory dress codes. In early 2019, Katebi launched her own clothing co-operative, Blue Tin Productions, which is run by refugee and immigrant women and promotes ethical garment production and is the first of its kind in the United States.

- Mary Zerkel is a Chicago-based organizer, artist and popular educator. She organizes against anti-Muslim surveillance programs with StopCVE Chicago, coordinates Communities Against Islamophobia for AFSC, and is PO Box collective member. As a founding member of the art collective Lucky Pierre, she has shown work across the country and internationally.

The focus of these posters and zine is the impact that "War on Terror" policies implemented by police at the city, state, and federal level have had upon Muslim communities in Chicago and around the United States. Each poster highlights the emptiness and feelings of silence around three anti-Muslim programs that continue to haunt these communities. While organizing efforts across Muslim communities are working to resist and challenge violent programs at the state level, as well as the lack of safety and the silence around these issues that exist at the community level, the harm that these domestic programs of policing and surveillance have had is irreversible. Each poster includes a word that was used by someone affected by the particular program to describe the most powerful feeling they felt at the time--or continue to feel today.

What Oppression Leads To

IMAN KORT

- **Iman Kort currently works at a therapeutic treatment center for young people ages 11-24, providing trauma informed care. She is also working on her master's degree in public administration, hoping to further her career in the public service realm. During her free time, Iman often spends time with friends, gardens, reads, creates art or engages in one of her many hobbies. In addition, Iman likes to find events and spaces that provide community and space for healing.**

This piece was the product of a Feminist Frameworks class I took during my sophomore year of college. It was my first formal introduction to feminism. My professor had us read several manifestos, declarations and statements on a weekly basis to gain understanding of the causes most important to people, causes they were willing to die for. Every class, we were asked to think about something we were willing to die for, something that we lost all hope in, sending us to the barricades. At the end of the class, we were challenged to write our own manifesto, declaration or statement, and share it with our peers.

This piece is my manifesto. It declares a position, refuses dialogue and scorns conciliation. It embodies the anger and rage I carried with me as a young college student trying to make sense of the world around me. My manifesto was inspired by my lived experiences, as well as the work of Bell Hooks, Sojourner Truth and Audre Lorde. My manifesto provided me space to acknowledge the oppression I face and to start living unapologetically. This is what will take me to the barricades, to fight, arm in arm, alongside my fellow warriors.

Green Light

SARAH AHMED

- Sarah Ahmed has a background in Art and Architectural History and is passionate about the arts and its ability to instill empathy. She believes in the power of storytelling and uses her Muslim American identity to inform her work.

- Instagram: @sarahbanana3

The Great Gatsby explores the illusion of the American Dream. Here, the book's iconic cover is reimagined to portray that illusion as it applies to Muslim America. The warm glow of the masjid contrasts with the ever present eyes of surveillance looming above.

FINDING MULTIPLICITIES

Within both communities and individuals, there exists ongoing internal conflict: to be palatable or to be true to our traditions; to be welcoming or to protect ourselves.

These pieces explore the ongoing conflict of identity, community and faith – the angst of existing on a thin line, balancing warring viewpoints. They ask to see Muslim communities as large, contradictory, and multiple.

Sacred Space/Women's Space

KATIE HASEEB

- Katie Haseeb is a multi-media artist who has been exploring the facets of her American Muslim identity over the past several years. She draws imagery from contemporary culture, historical figure painting, and classical Islamic motifs. She received a BFA in painting from the Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design in 2016. She currently lives and works in Chicago. Her work draws from personal experience, contemporary culture, and the Islamic tradition.

- Instagram: @katie.haseeb

The Muslim communities that I have been a part of have been both welcoming and insular, both open and skeptical to outsiders. I've been witness to several "doors open" masjid events—wherein non-Muslim neighbors visit our places of worship, perhaps to learn more about their local Muslim community, or maybe just out of sheer curiosity. Our communities and masajid have also been targeted and attacked by both state-ordered surveillance and white supremacist terrorism. As much as we feel the need to prove ourselves good neighbors—to be warm and welcoming, to explain our traditions in ways that are palatable to the white majority—we feel just as strongly the need to protect ourselves and our communities. The figure in this painting, who stands just outside the doorway to the women's prayer space, is both greeter and guard. She offers a flower and clutches a Qur'an, caught between kindness and apprehension towards an outside presence.

To the people that told me to go back to where I came from

NAJLAH IQBAL

- Najlah is a social worker, poet and activist. She has been writing ever since she could hold a pen. When she isn't writing or doing community work, she is binge watching *The Office*, going for nature walks, or sleeping.

- Artist Statement: My poem tells the story of my family's immigration but also that I come from more than one place, and I am more than one thing. This poem is for my family and for all the people that have been told "to go back to where they came from." You belong here.

To the people that told me to go back to where I came from:

You see brown skin and hijab and tell me I'm not America.
But you don't know that I am mixed blood. Ravenswood and India.
That my aunties and uncles crossed waters and skies
left their beloved Hyderabad so their children could have better lives.
You don't know the turmoil of language barriers,
and confusion navigating Chicago train stations.
That my aunty came here in chappals and a sari,
she didn't know about the brutal chills of the windy city.
You don't know the extra work shifts, the crowded apartments,
studying for citizenship tests, proving our Americanness.
You don't know the evenings my mother went to ESL classes,
briefly abandoning her mother tongue in those moments
as she struggled to find home in a new language.

The sacrifices made by my people are endless,
without them I wouldn't have made it.
Leaving rickshaws, and pani puri stalls
big family gatherings and former jobs,
greeting better opportunities with open arms,
to live an American dream our families could lead
for better futures.
Now we are the future.
They have watered their children
now blossomed into doctors, social workers and teachers
taught to be kind and help others.
You see me and say I am not America,
But we are so much more than what you think we are.

You tell me to go back to where I came from,
but this is where I am from.
Skyscrapers, and deep-dish, Chance the Snapper, you can't catch it.
Community organizers and justice, Sears Tower not Willis.
My cousin screaming with Michael Jordan's famous 1989 shot
art, diversity, and poetic thought, building bridges, fighting raids
Chicago with its resilient soul is what I call home.
But my mother's biryani and shalwar kameez pay homage to another city.
My soul and spirit carries complex identities from different countries.
I am America and India and Muslim and woman and poet who comes from a family of immigrants
so don't you dare tell me to go back to where I came from
because this is where I am from.

Face value

AYESHA FARHAT

- I have enjoyed doing art all my life. While initially working with pencil drawings, I have grown an interest and started working with paints such as watercolor, and enjoy doing mixed media art pieces that portray political issues as well as everyday life.

- Instagram: @ayesketches

My idea behind this piece was to portray the two types of "concealing" often done by women, and how they are seen and judged differently. This piece consists of a woman wearing a niqaab that is designed to look like it is a part of her face. This illusion is meant to represent the two ways that women often "conceal" themselves. One way is by hiding their true faces behind a veil, such as the niqaab. The other way is by enhancing their true faces to look better than usual, like the face on the niqaab that has been beautified with makeup. It is meant to bring importance to the way both hiding one's beauty and enhancing it are scrutinized by many, but there is reason behind both of them. We can also see a camera in the reflection of the woman's sunglasses, meant to show how media may portray the niqaabi woman different than a woman who is not. On the other hand, it also portrays the bright side of how being Muslim and showing it is slowly but surely becoming more normalized. The illusion created by this is meant to make viewers stop and think about how this changes what their first impression may have been.

The Binary

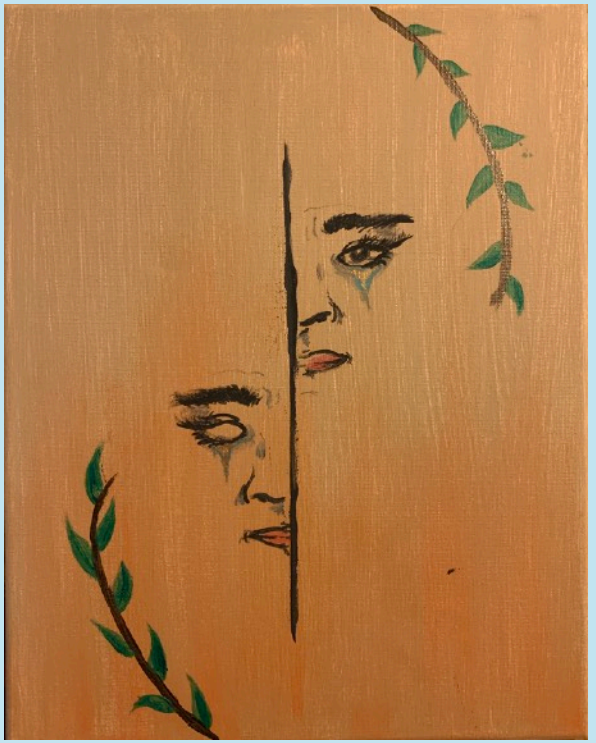
SUEMAYA HAYDAR

- I am an Art History student at DePaul University, with a double minor in museum studies and creative practice. Art has helped me find the courage to articulate how I'm feeling visually, especially when words don't come easy. I am self taught and passionate about art, and I hope to use it to help others in the future.

- Instagram: @lavendertrumpets

- Twitter: @bintyafawiyeh

I created this piece inspired by internal conflict and resolution, peace, and raw emotion. The olive branches symbolize internal peace, the gold tears symbolize growth, and the deep emotion in the facial expressions are meant to resonate with the viewer.



FINDING BEAUTY

Portrayals of Muslim experiences are often surface-level and one dimensional. In reality, these experiences are not black and white. There is beauty in the colorful moments that make up life as a Muslim.

The juxtaposition of textures here shows the complexity of Muslim experiences; the bright colors highlight hopes for a reimagined future.

Pomegranate Freedom
(حرية الرمان)

SHIRIEN DAMRA

- Shirien D. is a Palestinian artist based in Chicago. She is currently experimenting with digital illustration as she blends her traditional pencil and paper drawing skills with her graphic design skills.

- Instagram: @shirien.creates

This is a depiction of a Palestinian woman, Hurriyeh, in a world where Palestine has just become free from Israeli apartheid. The festive, bright colors and henna patterns represent a celebratory occasion. Hurriyeh looks ahead with hope. But she is also tired, and recognizes there is more work to be done, and thus, further struggle ahead. Hurriyeh knows that even though now Israeli occupation is over, it doesn't mean resistance is over for her people. As a woman, she recognizes the need to come together as a people and transform internalized patriarchy and racism, among other things. She also knows Palestinians must overcome both firsthand and secondhand generational trauma. The pomegranate is known as a symbol of rebirth. Hurriyeh doesn't want just any type of freedom. She wants the pomegranate kind of freedom. An end of Israeli oppression signals a rebirth of Palestinian society and a chance at a viable future. It will take a lot of work to ensure that future is healthy, stable, equal and just. Hurriyeh is up for the challenge.

A Dream in Kerala

IDREES KAMAL

- Born and raised in Chicago, Idrees is a self-taught music producer who is primarily interested in the sonic evolution of the hip-hop, electronic, and R&B genres, and, more generally, the spiritual impact of music. Influenced by the progressive production of artists like James Blake, A$AP Rocky, Kid Cudi, and Vince Staples, Idrees focuses on storytelling and emotional impact with his production. Idrees is also interested in the world of fashion design and is currently building a clothing label called BYDSGN. Through his art, Idrees' goal is to provide an experience that allows people to re-contextualize and perceive their emotions in completely new ways.

- Instagram and Twitter @idreesespieces

- https://soundcloud.com/prodbyidrees

As an American-born Indian Muslim, I haven't had the opportunity to really explore my heritage until a couple of years ago when I visited India for the first time. Of the pictures I took during my trip, I chose 6 of them to make a collage to really show the beauty and otherworldliness I experienced while there.

Science and Religion

NIDAL SHER

- ARTS a huge word, i don’t remember how far our relationship goes well it started the day i was born but i think it not something that has an end to it as a small child i didn't see things the way they were but i used to look at an artistic part of it

- Instagram: @nidalsher

I'm Nidal, just another guy destined for relative anonymity. My journey encompasses my escape from the rugged terrains of noshki, a heaven hidden away from the hustlebustle of 21st century.

Flower Girl

NADA ALZALLOUM

- I started sharing my art about a year to two ago. I have always loved art but never got the chance to delve into it. I've been apart of a few open mics and one art show.

- Instagram: @Nz_zs

What inspires me to make art is the vision of a better tomorrow for refugees and displaced peoples all around the world. Even those suffering in their own homes so I began photoshopping their original photos to invoke thought.

FINDING HOPE

These pieces explore experiences of occupation, community, and grief. The images instill a sense of camaraderie of sharing our burdens and brokenness as well as our joys and hopes. The thread of resilience connects communities as they uplift each other.

Masks // Naqaab

SOBIA SULTANA

- **Sobia Sultana is a senior at Illinois Institute of Technology. She has been an active part of Students for Justice for Palestine at Illinois Tech and hopes to further that work in the future. She writes poetry in Urdu and English about her experiences and experiences of those around her. She finds liberation in writing to her sisters that suffer from systematic oppression and violence. After having recently been introduced to the amazing work that is being done by black youth to combat the militarization of the police especially in the South Side of Chicago, she hopes to educate herself further and assist in the movement in any way she can.**

- **Artist Statement: We all use various things to come to our aid when we feel vulnerable - whether that be our bigotry, misogyny, or our ignorance. Every one of those we were as a mask to shield ourselves and our view of the world. This piece imagines a world in which we do not need them and in a world in which we allow our humanity to lead the way in our interactions with one another.**

Masks

If only we took off the masks we wear,
and exposed our bare skin for the world to see,
maybe we'd see that we have the same bumps and bruises.
No longer shacked by shame, our hearts would find themselves free.

If only we took off the masks we wear,
your wounds would be welcomed by gentle kisses of air so fresh.
With each peck, you'd feel less pain and heal a little more
as its coolness surrounds your burning flesh.

If only we took off the masks we wear,
you'd hear the screams I've silenced for so long.
As our thirsty souls dance under their first rain,
we'd see how much we've done ourselves wrong.

If only we took off the masks we wear,
you'd be able to feel the scars of those you hold dear.
You'd see the wrinkles on their foreheads, the drooping of their eyes
and the dents on their faces left by the weight of their tears.

If only we took off the masks we wear,
we'd have no need to keep our hearts concealed.
You could lay down your weapons and I'd surrender mine.
No longer would we carry the burden of this shield.

I got your back

NASEEM HAMDAN

- My name is Naseem Hamdan and I am of Palestinian descent. I've been heavily into photography for 10 years. However, I recently began sharing my photographs I've taken over the years. My first social media account was created less than two months ago and I am beginning to experience a similar sense of fulfillment when sharing my photos as I do when taking them.

- Instagram: @naseemh641

Children are urged by their elders to play in front of Al-Aqsa Mosque in Palestine to keep the energy of the grounds thriving and to not allow the occupation to stop them from enjoying their childhood. This moment of a child helping his friend "scratch that itch" he couldn't reach, is the type of love I hope this photo inspires the viewers to pass on. This world is a much better place when we all have each other's backs.

Women in War Zones

MARY HAZBOUN

- **Mary Hazboun is a Palestinian folk singer, writer, and artist who was born and raised in the city of Bethlehem in occupied Palestine. She has resided in the Chicagoland area since 2004. Hazboun graduated from DePaul University with a Master of Arts in Women's and Gender Studies, and *The Art of Weeping* came to life during her journey there, as an art collection that established a political platform for resistance, a tool to reclaim her Palestinian identity in the diaspora. It not only serves as a link to the geopolitics of both the Occupied Palestinian Territories and the United States, bringing forward the complex stories of Palestinian women living under the occupation and in the diaspora, but also challenges the western colonial fixed narrative of the Palestinian struggle. Over the past few years, Hazboun has participated in various cultural and artistic events across the U.S. and Canada, performing Palestinian folk music and showcasing *The Art of Weeping*. Recently, her collection made its way to the Vox Populi exhibition in Philadelphia.**

- **Etsy: https://www.etsy.com/shop/Theartofweeping**

"The Art of Weeping" collection emerged slowly, as I was grappling with multiple traumas due to living under the Israeli military occupation for twenty one years, and later forced to migrate to the U.S. in 2004. While a graduate student in Women's and Gender Studies at DePaul university, I started doodling in class to ease the flashbacks I was experiencing when reading course materials that discussed military and gender violence. Doodling was a way for me to avoid having to leave the classroom due to being triggered. Months later, doodles turned into sketches, and as a result, a collection of over forty complete art pieces came to life. My drawings highlight the complex and multilayered traumas of woman of color and their resistance against the intersecting systems of oppression manifested in the military machine and the patriarchal society. My artwork is an act of decolonizing these bodies, including my own; as well as a creative form of struggle against oppression through transgressing boundaries, making the trauma visible, and linking it with collective and ancestral traumas. My work is an invitation to start a conversation about mental health, especially since it remains a taboo in many communities of color. "The Art of Weeping" is unapologetically about grief. It is about allowing ourselves to fully experience our grief and create a space for our heartbrokenness. On the other hand, it is also about cultivating resilience and radical hope, so we can reclaim our struggle and work towards transformative social change.

Freedom

WAYNE LINDSEY

- As a Returning citizen, being free was all I thought of. After doing so much time, freedom was all that I wanted. I spend 43 years in prison, but Islam gave me my freedom long before.

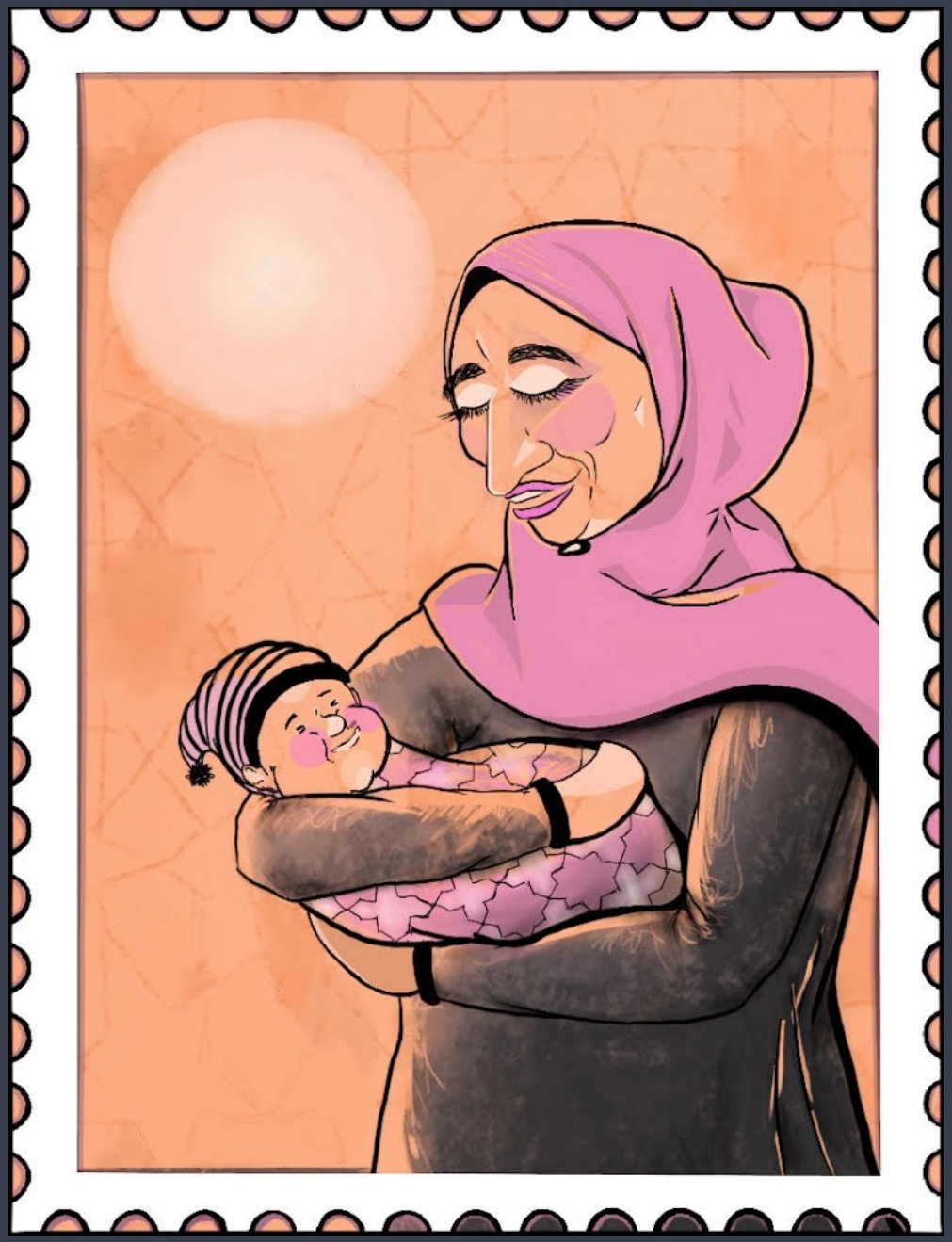
Being Muslim is Freedom. Being Muslim in America is freedom because not a lot of places would let you practice your religion, here you have a built in guarantee of practicing what you choose.

Investment

IMAN ARTISTS

- **This piece was made by multiple artists from the Inner City Muslim Action Network's Green Reentry program for returning citizens, immigrants, and youth living on the south side came together to talk about how we can invest in ourselves and what that costs.**

Investment: to receive partial access to resources that are gained inequitably at the expense of others in exchange of giving up your culture and ancestral norms and history. The feelings behind investment are explored in the shape, glaze, non-glaze, facial features, mouths, eyes, and colors, of our piggy banks.



Special thanks to Faizah Tooba for designing this image which was used for our official exhibit poster and materials!

THANK YOU

- StopCVE Chicago, American Friends Service Committee, PO Box Collective, CAIR-Chicago, Arab American Action Network.
- to all the friends and volunteers who helped us get ready for today, install the show, staple zines, etc.
- to the amazing artists in the show whose work inspires us!

Curatorial Committee: Sarah Ahmed, Aliah Ajamoughli, Briana Hanny, Arifa Ibrahim, Zareen Kamal, Meriem Sadoun, Hafsa Siddiqui, Faizah Tooba, Mary Zerkel.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS:

10.1

Feminist Science Fiction Book Club - *We Hunt the Flame*, by Hafsa Faizal

10.6 / 4-7 pm

FOUND Opening

10.18 / 8-10 pm

MOVIE NIGHT: Screening and discussion of short film *New York 1998* (dir. Meriem Sadoun) + acclaimed documentary *The Feeling of Being Watched* (dir. Assia Boundaoui)

10.19/ 10am-1pm

COUNTERING ANTI-MUSLIM RACISM ALLY TRAINING:
Learn and develop strategies to become a better ally to the Muslim Community. Facilitated by StopCVE Chicago and American Friends Service Committee

10.21 / 6-8 pm

FIBER CIRCLE WITH REFUGEE WOMEN SEWING COOP CEW
Work on your sewing or fiber project and learn how refugee women in Rogers Park are using their skills to help their families.

10.27/ 5-8 pm

CLOSING CONCERT
Performances from local Muslim artists: NAXO, Akh, Lyn Rye, and Selma D!